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# Big River Mine Tailings St. Francois County, Missouri Railroad Title Search Report

## **Potentially Responsible Party (PRP) Report**

PREPARED FOR:

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCY REGION 7, SUPERFUND DIVISION  
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*Big River Mine Tailings Site  
Railroad Title Search*

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## Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION.....	4
<b>Project Background</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Project Approach</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Site Background</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Site History</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Contaminants of Concern</b> .....	<b>6</b>
A.    Viable PRPs.....	7
<b>Union Pacific Railroad</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Corporate History of Missouri Pacific Railroad Company</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Associated Companies:.....	8
Illinois Southern Railway .....	8
Missouri-Illinois Railroad Company .....	9
Mississippi River & Bonne Terre Railway Company(MR&BT) .....	9
Saline Valley Railway Company .....	9
St. Louis & Iron Mountain Railroad Company.....	9
The Cairo, Arkansas and Texas Railroad.....	10
St. Francois County Electric Railway Company.....	10
Conclusions .....	12
HISTORICAL REFERENCES.....	13
CORPORATE REFERENCES .....	14
ATTACHMENTS.....	15

## Figures

Figure 1: Chat Dumps in St. Francois County, Missouri.....	5
Figure 2: Map of St. Francois County Railroads, 1930 .....	8
Figure 3: St. Francois County Railroad Systems - Mergers .....	11

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

Chenega Global Services, LLC (CGS) received Task Order 0017, Project Code 07CRRP02, from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 7 office, under the Superfund Contract Number EP-S7-09-08. The purpose of this task order is to provide EPA's Superfund Division with a vehicle through which to perform expedited site-specific Potentially Responsible Party (PRP) searches in support of the EPA Task Order/Project Officer (TOPO) search activities.

This Potentially Responsible Party Search Report for the Big River Mine Tailings Site (the "Site") summarizes the research conducted by the Records Specialists (RS) and Regulatory Analysts (RA) with respect to property ownership records in St. Francois County pertaining to railroad lines and the associated corporations.

### **PROJECT APPROACH**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7, Superfund Division, Kansas City, KS, contracted Chenega Global Services, LLC, Anchorage, AK to perform the PRP search and report. EPA asked that CGS conduct a title search for all railroad properties in St. Francois County, MO. After obtaining indexed title information CGS was asked to complete the following tasks in support of EPA's PRP search activities:

- Review and analyze title index entries obtained from St. Francois County Recorder of Deeds.
- Search for viable PRPs associated with title documentation and give corporate successor information for each.
- Provide a brief history of the St. Francois County railroad system, including information obtained through the title search.

### **SITE BACKGROUND**

The Big River Mine Tailings Site is composed of seven large areas of mine waste in the former mining region known as the "Old Lead Belt" in St. Francois County, MO. The region is located 70 miles south of St. Louis, MO and covers approximately 110 square miles in size.

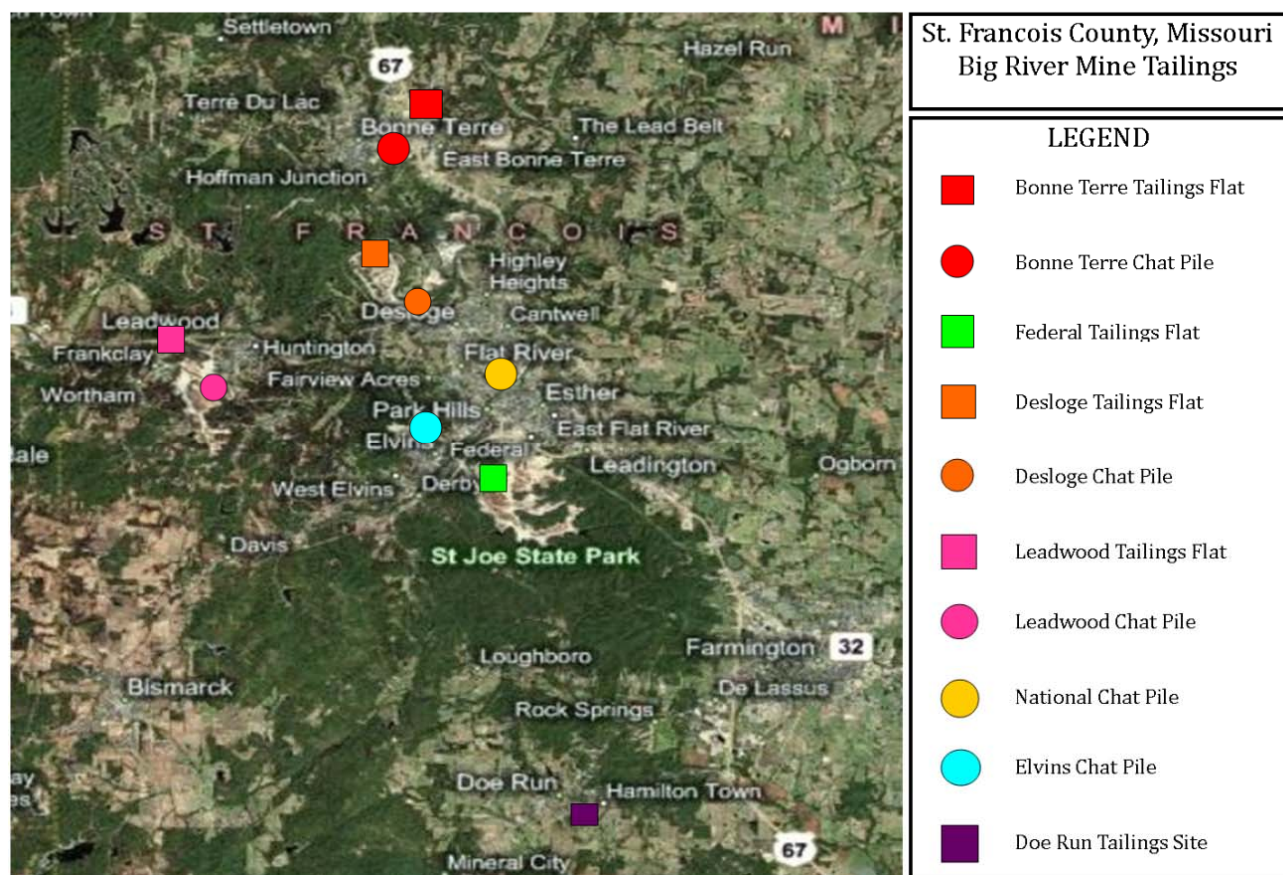


Figure 1: Chat Dumps in St. Francois County, Missouri

## SITE HISTORY

Railroad transportation did not make a marked presence in St. Francois County until the 1850's when St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad Company received its first land grants from the United States government. Throughout the county, many smaller railroads were built and then absorbed into larger companies like Missouri Pacific and subsequently Union Pacific. By 1859, the St. Louis and Iron Mountain had extended its line from Bismarck north to Pilot Knob and south to Belmont, on the border of Missouri and Kentucky, by 1869. The Cairo, Arkansas and Texas Railroad, a line running between the Belmont Branch and the main branch of the St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad was consolidated in 1874 making up the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad. Merged with Missouri-Pacific in 1917, the entire length of the St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad was integrated into the larger company's system.

Starting around 1880 the Mississippi River and Bonne Terre Railway was built in an effort to speed transport for the St. Joseph Lead Company. The initial building costs were shared between St. Joe Lead and Desloge Lead companies until 1887, when St. Joe bought out the remaining shares. By 1890, Mississippi River and Bonne Terre had completed track between Riverside and Bonne Terre. The earlier section of track to Summit from Bonne Terre was abandoned at this time. Mississippi



### *Big River Mine Tailings Site Railroad Title Search*

River and Bonne Terre Railway's lines extended straight north of Bonne Terre out of the county, through and south of Doe Run on the western branch, and south through Flat River and into Elvins on the eastern branch.

The Illinois Southern Railroad was a length of track connecting the eastern part of Missouri and western portion of Illinois through to Chicago. In 1905 a section of track, which began in Salem, Illinois, was extended into Ste. Genevieve County and through to Bismarck on the western edge of St. Francois County. It linked with the St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad in Bismarck, the Mississippi River and Bonne Terre in Elvins and Flat River then continued east out of the county. After the First World War, Illinois Southern was reorganized into the Missouri-Illinois Railroad which was purchased by Missouri Pacific in 1929, fully merged with them in 1978, and is now an operating portion of track under Union Pacific.

Connecting to the Illinois Southern line was the St. Francois County Railroad which began as the St. Francois County Electric Railroad. Initially the track was built in 1902, a length of less than five miles, running from DeLassus to Farmington. It was bought unfinished in 1904 and was extended as St. Francois County Railroad to Esther, just east of Flat River. It connected to the Mississippi River and Bonne Terre Railway in Flat River then eventually with the Missouri-Illinois, previously known as the Illinois Southern, in Hurryville around 1926.

The Cape Girardeau Northern Railroad entered the county on its eastern side just southeast of Farmington then continued northwest into Farmington. This section of track was initially known as the Saline Valley Railroad in 1906; the company was started by Louis Houck, but was later reorganized with the Cape Girardeau and Chester Railroad into the Cape Girardeau Northern Railroad around 1912. The Cape Girardeau Northern was acquired by Missouri Pacific in 1928. (9)

Missouri Pacific Railroad Company was incorporated in 1917 under the laws of Missouri (14). A continuation of the Pacific Railroad to the West Coast, Missouri Pacific ("MoPac") was built strictly with the desire to connect St. Louis to the West. Over its lifetime in St. Francois County, MoPac absorbed several smaller railroad systems including the St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad, St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern Railroad, and Missouri-Illinois Railroad, many of which had incorporated other even smaller railroad systems (9). MoPac eventually ran into financial trouble in 1933 and was placed under trusteeship until 1956 when it was finally reorganized further to pull the company out of bankruptcy. MoPac continued to grow, incorporating other railroads into its system and branching out into other aspects of the transportation industry (4). In 1997 MoPac merged with Union Pacific, which currently operates all the rail lines in St. Francois County (1514).

### **CONTAMINANTS OF CONCERN**

The Site area is located within St. Francois County, Missouri and contains seven waste chat dumps that are a result of lead mining operations. Lead mining chat and mine tailings contain varying amounts of lead, cadmium, zinc, and other minerals which are released into the environment through erosion. These contaminants may enter the surrounding areas through runoff or as

airborne dust particles. Additionally, the contaminants can be further dispersed when the mining wastes are transported from the site to be used as a building or fill material.

## **A. VIABLE PRPS**

### **UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD**

*(Corporate Successor to Missouri Pacific Railroad Company)*

Initial Presence on Site: March 12, 1849

Final Presence on Site: Currently Active

MO Charter No.:

The Union Pacific Railroad is the corporate successor of the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company. The Union Pacific Railroad is currently active and in good standing.

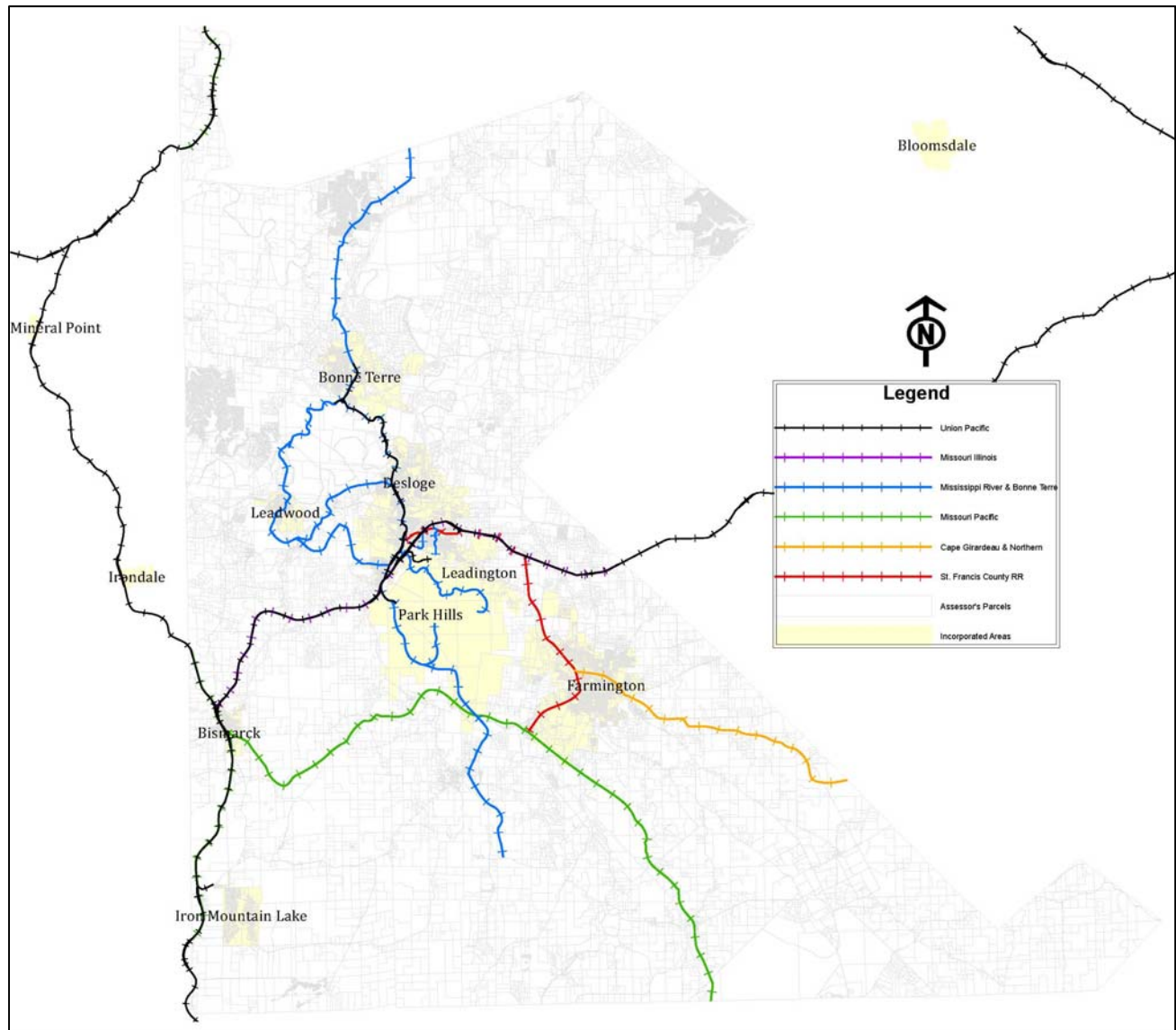
### **CORPORATE HISTORY OF MISSOURI PACIFIC RAILROAD COMPANY**

The Missouri Pacific Railroad Company originated as Pacific Railroad Company. According to the Missouri Secretary of State's website, Pacific Railroad Company was incorporated in Missouri on March 12, 1849 and was chartered to construct a railroad from St. Louis westward to the Pacific Ocean. In 1876, a debt crisis occurred, and the company was reformed as Missouri Pacific Railway in 1876. (16)

Missouri Pacific Railway acquired the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad Company in 1881. The line ran through the southern part of the county, passing through Bismarck, Delassus, and Knob Lick. (4)

In 1917, Missouri Pacific Railway merged with the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railroad Company. The two companies reformed as the Missouri Pacific Railroad Company (MoPac). MoPac was placed in trusteeship in 1933 after it declared bankruptcy. The company remained in trusteeship until its reorganization under the same name in 1956. (4)

Merger applications were filed in 1980 to merge the Union Pacific and MoPac companies. (Other companies merged into Union Pacific in 1980. However, only entities associated with this Site are included in this report.) The ICC approved the application in 1982 and Union Pacific took control of MoPac. The merger became official on January 1, 1997, and MoPac's corporate identity was dissolved at that time. (15)



**Figure 2: Map of St. Francois County Railroads, 1930**

## ASSOCIATED COMPANIES:

### **Illinois Southern Railway**

The Illinois Southern Railway was formed in 1903 as a consolidation of Illinois Southern Railway and the Southern Missouri Railway Company; both parties were incorporated in 1900. The Illinois Southern Railroad connected the eastern part of Missouri to Chicago, Illinois. In 1905, a line that began in Salem, Illinois, was extended into the western edge of St. Francois County. It linked with the St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad in Bismarck, and with the Mississippi River and Bonne Terre in Elvins and Flat River. (2, 9, 12)

During World War I, the United States Government took charge of the line and purchased a boat that was used to transport trains across the Mississippi River. After the war, Illinois Southern



*Big River Mine Tailings Site*  
*Railroad Title Search*

Railway was unable to pay for the boat. As a result, the company went into receivership in 1920 and was reorganized in 1921 as the Missouri Illinois Railroad Company. In 1929, the Missouri Pacific took a controlling interest in the company, and fully merged with them in 1978. It now operates a portion of track under the Union Pacific Railroad system. (9, 11)

**Missouri-Illinois Railroad Company**

The Missouri-Illinois Railroad Company was formed in 1921 as a result of the bankruptcy of the Illinois Southern Railway. (13)

The line consisted of approximately 200 miles of track in Missouri and Illinois along the Mississippi River. The company also offered a ferryboat transfer service across the river. The company's presence in St. Francois County was the result of its affiliation with the Mississippi River & Bonne Terre Railway Company (MR&BT). The Missouri-Illinois was acquired by the Missouri Pacific in 1929. (6)

**Mississippi River & Bonne Terre Railway Company (MR&BT)**

Mississippi River & Bonne Terre Railway Company (MR&BT) was the primary subsidiary of the Missouri-Illinois Railroad Company. The Mississippi River and Bonne Terre Railway was built for the St. Joseph Lead Company around 1880, to improve the speed of freight transportation. Costs of constructing the railway were shared between St. Joseph Lead and Desloge Lead companies with St. Joseph paying two-thirds and Desloge paying one-third. By 1887, St. Joseph Lead acquired all of Desloge's shares to the railway. Tracks were completed between Riverside and Bonne Terre by 1890, and the tracks to Summit from Bonne Terre were abandoned. (9)

MR&BT ran rail lines throughout St. Francois County, Missouri, passing through Bonne Terre, Flat River, Elvin, and Doe Run. Both the Missouri-Illinois Railroad Company and MR&BT Railway Company were acquired by Missouri Pacific Railroad Company in 1929. (5)

**Saline Valley Railway Company**

The Saline Valley Railway Company was incorporated in July 1904, by Louis Houck. The line was to begin in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, and run westward toward Farmington in St. Francois County. Construction of the line was completed in 1912, and the company reorganized as the Cape Girardeau Northern Railway Company. The railroad lines were abandoned in 1917 after several unprofitable years (11, 17).

Louis Houck died in 1925 and the company went into receivership. In 1929, Missouri Pacific Railway Company acquired the portion of the track near Cape Girardeau. Portions of the line near Farmington were purchased by J.P. Cayce for the local bondholders of the former Saline Valley Railway Company. CGS was unable to find information regarding the tracks' use after Cayce's purchase. (7, 9)

**St. Louis & Iron Mountain Railroad Company**

The St. Louis & Iron Mountain Railroad Company was formed to transport ore from mines in southeastern Missouri to St. Louis. The company was incorporated through an act of congress in 1851. (9, 20)

The line was surveyed beginning in 1852, at which time the company had to petition congress for a right of way through Jefferson Barracks, an army base along the proposed line. The army was concerned about the possibility of sparks from the trains igniting ammunition stored

*Big River Mine Tailings Site  
Railroad Title Search*

near the proposed track location, and suggested that the trains be pulled through the area with mules. In 1853 the petition was approved, allowing the trains to remain running as they passed through the base. (3)

In 1853, the company's board of directors was chosen, and construction began in St. Louis. Construction costs were greatly underestimated, and the company was granted aid from the State of Missouri on three separate occasions. By 1859 the line to Pilot Knob was completed. (9)

The company was not successful, and in 1866 it was sold at auction to the State of Missouri. The state assumed operations for a year, and in 1867, sold it to McKay, Simmons, and Vogel. The company was transferred the same year to Thomas Allen, who remained president of the company for many years. (21)

The company's presence in St. Francois County, Missouri, was through the southern extension of the road, known as the Belmont branch. The branch, completed in 1869, extended from Bismarck to Belmont. (10)

The St. Louis & Iron Mountain Railroad Company was reorganized in 1874 as the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railway Company. After the reorganization, the Missouri Pacific Railway acquired the St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railway Company in 1881. In 1917 Missouri Pacific Railway Company and The St. Louis, Iron Mountain & Southern Railway Company merged to form Missouri Pacific Railroad Company. (4)

**The Cairo, Arkansas and Texas Railroad**

The Cairo, Arkansas and Texas Railroad operated from Mississippi County to Poplar Bluff where the main line of the St. Louis and Iron Mountain and Southern was located. The Cairo operated separately from St. Louis and Iron Mountain until 1874 when the two companies consolidated. In 1917, the St. Louis, Iron Mountain and Southern merged into the Missouri-Pacific Railroad. (9)

**St. Francois County Electric Railway Company**

The St. Francois County Electric Railway Company was formed in March 1901, by Peter Giessing, H. Sleeth, J. P. Cayce, W. R. Lang, M. L. Clardy, John Giessing, Thos. Land, Louis Miller, W. F. Doss, A. T. Nixon, J. M. Morris, Dr. E. C. McCormick and others. Construction of the line began in Delassus, MO in 1902 and ran approximately four miles to the powerhouse that had been built at Farmington, MO. The company's was unable to sell all its bonds, and funds ran out at this time. (8)

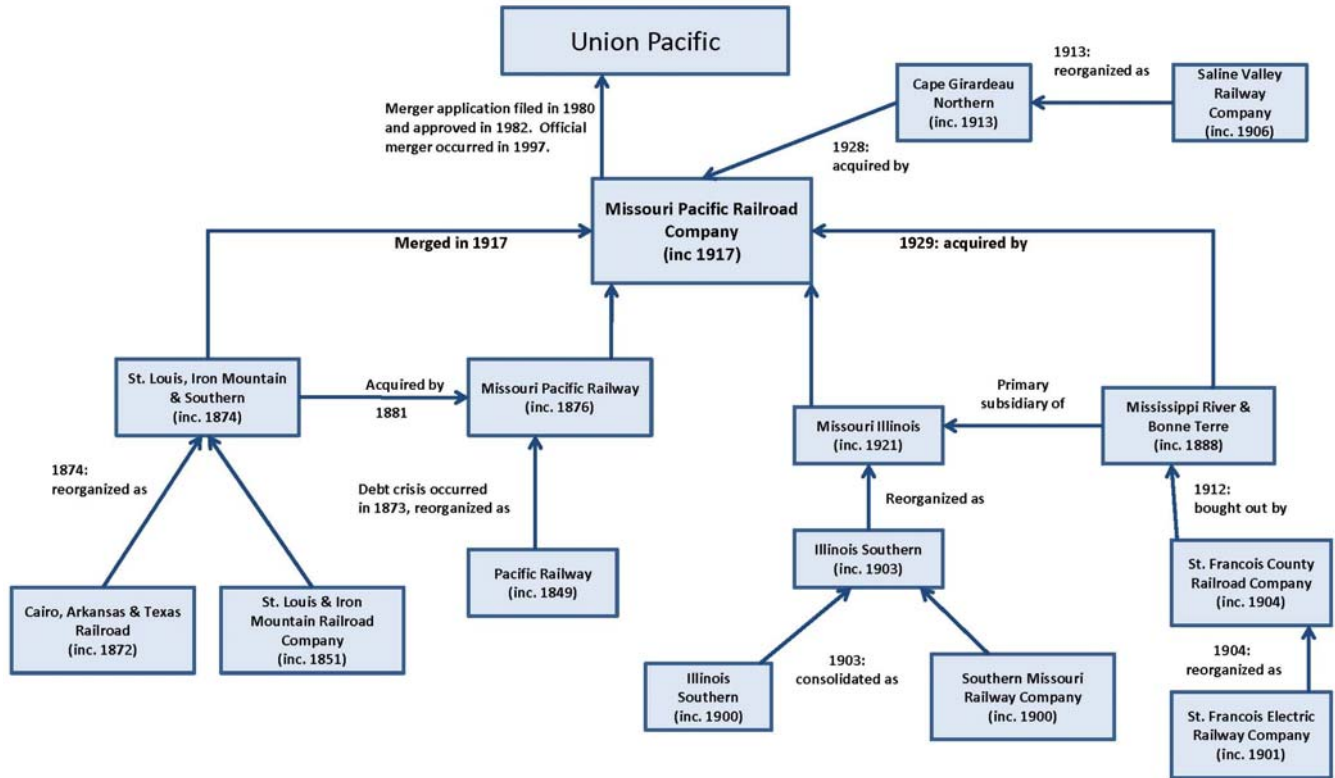
In February 1904, prior to the completion of construction, the company reorganized into the St. Francois County Railroad Company. On July 24 of the same year, the railroad's first train began operation. The St. Francois County Railroad connected with the MRBT lines in Esther, St. Francois County, Missouri. (9)

The railroad expanded to meet the needs of local businesses and passengers, but the company experienced financial strain from its inception. The St. Francois County Electric Railway Company went into receivership and, in 1910, was purchased and incorporated by William Harlan. In 1912, the company was sold to the Mississippi River & Bonne Terre Railway Company (MRBT). (1, 18)

In 1926, the St. Francois County Railroad Company was sold to local businessmen who made improvements to both the track and the cars. Passenger service came to an end in 1927, and

*Big River Mine Tailings Site  
Railroad Title Search*

thereafter, the line was used solely for freight transport. The line shut down completely in 1957, and the company dissolved in 1959. (8, 19)



**Figure 3: St. Francois County Railroad Systems - Mergers**

## CONCLUSIONS

The data provided in this report is intended to assist EPA in future investigations regarding the Big River Mine Tailings Site in St. Francois County, Missouri. In the course of the investigation by CGS, only one viable PRP was identified. Union Pacific Railroad is currently the only operating rail company in the county. Union Pacific last filed an annual report with the State of Missouri on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010 as a foreign corporation. Union Pacific Corporation is a Utah Corporation. (22)

The Registered Agent contact information in the State of Missouri is as follows:

The Corporation Company  
120 South Central Avenue  
Clayton, MO 63105

The Registered Agent contact information in the State of Utah is as follows:

CT Corporation System  
136 E South Temple, STE 2100  
Salt Lake City, UT 84111

The current company headquarters address given on the most recent Missouri Secretary of State annual report filing is as follows:

8<sup>th</sup> & Eaton Ave, Martin Tower  
Bethlehem, PA 18018

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21. St. Louis and Iron Mountain Railroad Company. 7/29/1867. *Articles of Incorporation*. Missouri Secretary of State
22. Union Pacific Corporation. 3/2/2010. *Annual Report*. Missouri Secretary of State.

## ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Historical References

Attachment B: Corporate References

Attachment C: St. Francois County Railroad Merger Chart

Attachment D: Maps